

## Against the Grain

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### People Profile: Sally A. Gore

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now exists allowing researchers to share and/or repurpose data as they've not been able to do before. These features speed up the scientific process, making it possible for researchers to make new discoveries faster and with greater efficiency than in the past.

But all of the benefits of e-Science go unappreciated if scientists lack the knowledge and support to take advantage of them. Enter computer scientists, librarians, and publishers — fields with knowledge and expertise in making information accessible, shared, and preserved. Working together, these groups can address the challenges scientists face, while supporting their work and advancing their discoveries. Many questions remain, too, for libraries and librarians seeking to find their place in this collaborative effort. What skills do we bring to the table already and which do we need to learn or enhance to deal with this changing environment?

### Working with Data

When we look at the issue of vast amounts of data — *think information* — being generated, we can identify several areas where researchers have a need that librarians can fill. The first is **data management**. Data management focuses on the entire life cycle of data, requiring researchers to think about and attend to data from creation through analysis through publication and ultimately to either preservation (curation) or destruction. Questions of format, storage requirements, and security are not things that scientists have needed to think about as much in the past. It was easy to store notebooks on a shelf, to loan them to someone else if desired, to file things away in file cabinets.

Think of how fast we've moved from floppy discs to zip drives to high-performance computer centers. Each of these advancements has affected data management, but the speed of computer processing has far outpaced the speed of the research process, let alone human behavior. Survey any set of labs and you're bound to find scientists who still write notes in notebooks, store data on the hard drive of their desktop, and back things up on thumb drives. The need to raise awareness and educate researchers in this area is a vital role that librarians, experts in information management, can pursue.

**Data sharing** is also an area where librarians can find a role. Both the **National Science Foundation** and the **National Institutes of Health**, along with many other public and private funding bodies, require recipients to include a data sharing plan in their grant proposal. Such a requirement means that researchers need to have a way to do this besides merely saying that they will share their data with anyone who asks for it. Computer scientists are working to build repositories that will make both storing and sharing data easier for scientists. Librarians can offer support through institutional repositories, allowing students and researchers to submit smaller data sets along

with their publications for easier access to the public. Publishers are also beginning to work in this area, building complementary databases of data sets, linked to the associated articles in their bibliographic databases. One of the latest examples of this new publishing model is the new **BioMed Central** title, *GigaScience* (<http://www.gigasciencejournal.com/>).

*GigaScience* aims to revolutionize data dissemination, organization, understanding, and use — an online open-access, open-data journal, publishing “big-data” studies from the entire spectrum of life and biomedical sciences. To achieve the goals, the journal has a novel publication format: one that links standard

manuscript publication with an extensive database that hosts all associated data and provides data analysis tools and cloud-computing resources.<sup>2</sup>

This journal likely exemplifies a coming trend in scientific publishing. For some time, publishers have asked authors to submit data along with their manuscripts. The move towards sharing data through linked repositories, as well as making data sets part of the peer review process, demonstrates both recognition and support of e-Science by the publishing industry.

Finally, **data preservation and curation** are areas often cited as a natural place for

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## against the grain people profile

### Sally A. Gore

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**BORN AND LIVED:** I was born in Fredericksburg, VA and grew up in Petersburg, VA. The first three decades of my life were spent in the south, but I've lived in New England since the early 90s.

**EARLY LIFE:** Happy kid

**PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES:** I've had two somewhat formal careers; as an ordained minister and as a librarian, and some side ventures into exercise physiology, volunteer coordination, non-profit work, office work, log flume operator, etc.

**FAMILY:** I live with my spouse, **Lynn**, our dog, Zebediah, and our cat, Tater.

**IN MY SPARE TIME:** I play the mandolin, do art, maintain my blogs (<http://sallygore.wordpress.com/> and <http://buttonaday.wordpress.com/>), ride my scooter, listen to a lot of music, read a lot of books, watch a lot of movies, and exercise not enough.

**FAVORITE BOOKS:** *Lying Awake* by **Mark Salzman**, *Dove* by **Robin Lee Graham**, and any and everything by **Annie Dillard**.

**PET PEEVES:** Motorized lawn tools, litter, and the phrase, “It just can't be done.”

**PHILOSOPHY:** “Father, forgive us for what we must do, you forgive us and we'll forgive you. We'll forgive each other 'til we both turn blue, then we'll whistle and go fishin' in heaven.” (John Prine)

**MOST MEMORABLE CAREER ACHIEVEMENT:** Still waiting for it — to win an Oscar for Best Original Screenplay. (Being a panelist on the national MLA Webcast was pretty cool, though.)

**GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW:** To be in a position where I positively influence the overall direction of our profession, either as a library director or a consultant. If this doesn't pan out, I'm hoping to play the mandolin for **Rosanne Cash**.

**HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS:** I hope to see our profession expanding, becoming more and more entrepreneurial and creative, so that we're seen as an equal and integral part of information creation, organization, and access. I'd love to see us get out of the “middle man” position, to stop hanging our hats (and our value) on simply providing resources and focus more on creating them ourselves via new modes of publication, repositories, Web tools, apps, and more. 🐼

